



Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
Florida House of Representatives
District 9

September 27, 2011

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

As public servants, we are not in the business of dispensing vengeance. Ours is the business of making decisions to help keep Floridians safe from crime while spending the public's tax dollars prudently. Towards that end, I have filed HB 4051 which would repeal the death penalty in Florida.

I urge you not to sign any death warrants that may be on your desk awaiting consideration. Instead, I respectfully request that you enact a moratorium on the death penalty in the State of Florida. I believe that life without parole, as an alternative to the death penalty, is the better path.

Executions are carried out at staggering cost to taxpayers. In its 2000 report, "The High Price of Killing Killers," the *Palm Beach Post* found that Florida spent approximately \$51 million each year to enforce the death penalty. With that \$51 million, we could put 850 law enforcement officers on Florida's streets, as well as adding more FDLE investigators and equipment to our arsenal against crime.

Life without parole is a sensible alternative to the death penalty. Unlike decades ago, a sentence of life without parole means exactly what it says – convicts locked away in prison until they die. In reality, it is much less expensive to keep criminals in prison for life than it is for the state to execute them. A sentence of life in prison without parole allows mistakes to be corrected or new evidence to come to light, serving to increase faith and fairness in our justice system.

One of the underlying questions in the debate about state-sponsored executions is the proper role and place of government. The appropriate question for state government is: how do we keep people safe from crime in the most cost effective way? When you analyze the numbers, state-sponsored execution is not the correct answer. On the basis of what is best for the citizens of our great state, I urge you to impose a moratorium on executions in Florida.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle".

Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
District 09

MRV:jr